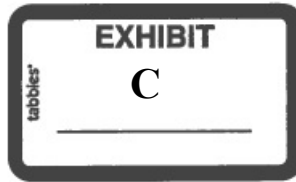


Michael A. Washington  
[REDACTED]



Mr. Washington:

Effective March 24, 2023, you are being separated from employment and dismissed from your position as Fire Chief of the Cincinnati Fire Department in accordance with Article V. Section 6 of the Charter of the City of Cincinnati, which states:

After the fire chief has served six months, he or she shall be subject to removal only for cause including incompetency, inefficiency, dishonesty, insubordination, unsatisfactory performance, any other failure of good behavior, any other acts of misfeasance, malfeasance, or nonfeasance in office, or conviction of any felony. If removed for cause the fire chief may demand written charges and the right to be heard thereon before the city manager. Pending the completion of such hearing the city manager may suspend the fire chief from office.

Since you became Fire Chief, I have spoken to you regarding your performance several times. The issues we have discussed include:

- In November of 2021, you were instructed to initiate a climate assessment of the Fire Department to evaluate the workplace culture and give potential recommendations for improving Department morale. You did not do this. This inaction and your continued blaming of subordinate staff for issues raised have led to the perception you do not take workplace concerns seriously. Since November 2021, the workplace culture in the Department has worsened, in part due to your inaction. When Women Helping Women was engaged at my direction to assist the Fire Department in improving its culture, you failed to adequately support their efforts. As a result, I no longer have confidence in your ability to implement or oversee the long-term, sustainable workplace culture change the Cincinnati Fire Department requires.
- On February 20, 2023, you were unavailable during an apartment fire that injured citizens and employees. When questioned about your unavailability, you responded by blaming subordinate employees, rather than taking responsibility as the head of the Fire Department.
- You disobeyed my directive when managing Lieutenant Freeman's return to duty after he was arrested for alleged assault and obstruction of official business. Instead of consulting the HR Director as I directed, you contacted me, ignored HR guidance without rational justification, reached an undocumented agreement absent any oversight by me or my designee, exercised poor judgment in reassigning Lt. Freeman, and misrepresented my directives to others. Following these actions, you cited the labor management agreement as the reason for doing

so, which is inaccurate and represents an unwillingness to take ownership for your decisions.

- Your management of the acquisition of a training center for the Fire Department was not effective and required assistance from the City Manager's Office.
- Your communication with my office and various directors within the City Administration has not been effective, often requiring micromanagement of lower-level responsibilities that I should be able to entrust to you without oversight.

Per the language in the City Charter, you have the right to demand that these issues be presented to you as written charges and the right to an audience with me to hear your defense. If you do not wish to exercise that right, all compensable earned leave will be paid out in accordance with Human Resources Policies and Procedures. You are responsible for the return of all City-owned equipment. Failure to return all equipment may affect your final pay out. Such equipment may include:

Laptop

Mobile Phone

I-Pad

Card Access ID Badge and Other Employee Identification

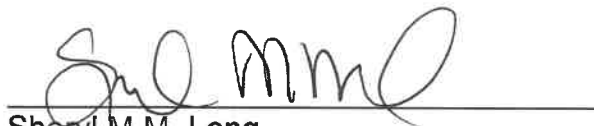
Desk Key(s)

Door Keys

Car Keys

In addition, you will receive COBRA information from the Risk Management Office regarding your option for the continuation of healthcare benefits.

If you have questions regarding any contributions to the Cincinnati Retirement System, please contact the Retirement Department at 352-3227.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sheryl M.M. Long', is written over a horizontal line.

Sheryl M.M. Long  
City Manager